

CHAPTER NINE
MEGATRON RETURNS



KAON

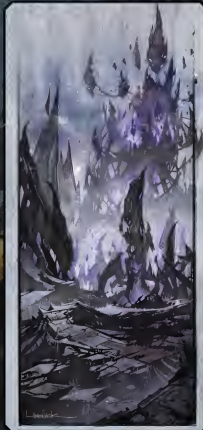
"Kaon [an allegorical place name signifying a land of "chaos"] served as Megatron's seat of power as he first began assembling the Deception forces into a worldwide army," states the city's entry in IDW's 2008 trade paperback reprint of *Transformers: More than Meets the Eye*. As a reactionary, radical city-state that expressed supreme dissatisfaction with the Autobots High Council, favoring extreme conservatism and nihilism in Cybertronian politics, Kaon was ideologically opposed to peaceful Autobots dissidents or any beings unwished to quash the Deception ideals of righteous, forceful conquest—their Manifest Destiny of the cosmos.

On this page and the title page previous, High Moon Studios' design team demonstrates their prowess developing a uniquely chilling aesthetic for Megatron (and his Decepticons') seat of power, an aesthetic that is deliberately different from the smooth, golden splendor of Iacon. Kaon rises in stark contrast to Iacon; the city is a nightmare dreamscape: sharper, darker, and more horrifyingly organic than the Autobots' capital city.



As previously stated in chapter two, High Moon Studios allowed their designers to research and design hundreds of pieces of artwork regarding settings in *Fall of Cybertron* in order to get the proper "flavor" and aesthetic for each place visited by the playable characters. Kaon is much different stylistically than Iacon—where the Autobots' stronghold is smooth, polished buildings with rounded edges and rendered in colors from a soft palette, Kaon exists as its diametric opposite: dark, foreboding colors finish off buildings with sharp points, crystalline towers, and protruding spires that seem to hint at the villainy of its inhabitants. The buildings of Kaon resemble colossal weapons themselves—ferce, sinister, and ominous.

It's absolutely apparent in the concept renderings for the city of Kaon that the Decepticons, in their profound arrogance to appear potent and powerful, have allowed themselves to utilize their precious Energon reserves by lighting their city blocks and towering spires day-and-night, in spite of the knowledge that the planet's core has been poisoned with Dark Energon (at the hands of their leader, Megatron) and that Cybertron itself and all of its many inhabitants will soon shut down; all techno-organic life will grind to a halt.





A STERN WARNING

After the events of *War for Cybertron*, the once-beautiful capital city of Iacon has been destroyed by the Autobot-Decepticon Civil war. In response to the Decepticons' victory, Kaon has been transformed into a city of celebration; Megatron has created a metropolis that extols the Decepticon victory—the Decepticons are on the rise. That's because THEY'VE WON THE WAR. The Decepticons' spoils of this bitter conflict—the giant heads of fallen Autobot heroes—are soldered into the very walls of Kaon, standing as a deadly reminder to all dissidents who might fancy betraying the Decepticon cause. A mixture of Medieval heads-on-spikes and an ominous Mount Rushmore of disembodied freedom-fighters, Megatron is sending a deadly message to all who oppose him.



SOUNDWAVE REBUILDS MEGATRON

One of the more interesting gaming interactions within the narrative occurs when Megatron's devoted lieutenant, Soundwave, tries to re-construct his fallen commander within the confines of his laboratory. Casual fans and aficionados alike will marvel at this intricate puzzle (pictured here as a two-page splash), since the Decepticons are all-but leaderless at this point in time: Starscream's bungled attempt to assault the Autobots in the previous chapter was only redeemed by the Combaticons' superior military prowess. Without Megatron's guidance, his faction is rudderless: Soundwave MUST rebuild his destroyed leader in order to give the Decepticons a fighting chance.

The smaller image displayed on this splash page is the designer's interpretation of what Megatron saw when awakened—after Soundwave put him together again.

When Megatron is awakened by Soundwave, he is compelled to find Starscream and mete out justice; the usurper must be punished for leading the Decepticons in the wake of Megatron's downfall at the hands of Metropolis. After his thirst for vengeance has been satisfied, he must make his way back to Iacon and recover Trionex's broken parts: the Autobots have misappropriated Decepticon energy reserves, and Megatron wants this energy to begin building a new Decepticon empire. The tyrant refuses to leave his home planet, and pressures his troops into staying on Cybertron to weather out the "Great Shutdown" as well, believing it will not be as bad as many pundits have prognosticated.

GLADIATORIAL PITS OF KAON

A young Megatron rose to power through his skill in the art of rhetoric and his success in brutal personal combat when participating as a peerless pit fighter in Cybertron's über-violent gladiatorial games located in the city of Kaon. Although pit fighting is essentially a brutal contest pitting two Cybertronians against each other, many Cybertronians flocked to the games to seek a violent outlet to relieve their boredom. The preproduction splash page features a primed and prepared warrior entering the Gladiatorial Pits to the rising cheer of a bloodthirsty crowd, while the image in the top right is Aaron Limonick's rendering of the outside of an arena at Kaon.



Utilizing his profound popularity (Megatron never lost in combat), the aspiring dictator swayed thousands of disillusioned Cybertronians to his cause by stating that the reigning Autobot High Council was perpetrating a massive fraud. This purported "deception"—that the planet's Autobot politicians were hiding their peoples' natural bent toward galactic invasion and conquest—rallied many Cybertronians toward Megatron's cause; his faction was therefore dubbed the "Decepticons" after this entirely possible (yet wholly fabricated) Autobot masquerade.* Due to the important role these arenas played in Megatron's ascension to power, Megatron still holds this "sport" in high regard. Pictured here is a preproduction rendering of the arena where Megatron developed the skills—of both rhetoric and armed combat—that trained him to become a peerless despot.

*Paraphrased from the entry "Gleadiatorial Combat" in *DW's* reprinted trade paperback sourcebooks, *Transformers: More than Meets the Eye*.





Many gamers viewing Kaon for the first time are struck by the city's ominous presence; it is a tortured metropolis that seems to ooze dread as it hauntingly looms over its sinister inhabitants, the Decepticons, and their terrified Autobot prisoners-of-war. Initially, gamers almost always cite an adjective that reflects Kaon's vicious nature as the seat of Deception power. However, after playing *Fall of Cybertron* for a number of hours, those same Transfans are able to step back and admire the level of beauty, artistry, and high craftsmanship which High Moon's designers injected into rendering the landscape of Kaon: a city that should be both disturbingly *awesome* and gloriously *awe-inspiring*.



SOUNDWAVE



FRONT



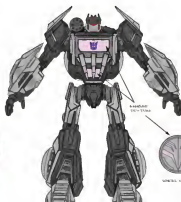
SIDE



BACK

Before Teletraan One subjected Soundwave to an invasive reformatting process in Earth year 1984—essentially turning Megatron's trusted right-hand robot into the iconic blue and silver cassette player that Transfams worldwide know and love—the Deception communications officer's Cybertronian alternate mode was that of an armored carrier; although some clever toy collectors have found a way to effect a "boombox mode" (check some YouTube channels...) from the wonderfully-articulated Hasbro interpretation of the *War for Cybertron* action figure.

In *Fall of Cybertron*, Soundwave remains one of Megatron's most trusted lieutenants, yet his unwavering loyalty to his commander and tendency to spy on his peers at the behest of the Deception leader has made him a bit unpopular at times. His function and personality is recounted in great detail within the text of his original G1 tech spec biography: "It is said Soundwave can hear a fly sneeze. Uses anything he hears for blackmail to advance his status. Opportunist. Despised by all other Deceptions. Sensors can detect even lowest energy radio transmissions. Able to read minds by monitoring electrical brain impulses. Acts as radio link for others. Locates and identifies Autobots, then informs Deceptions. Carries a concussion blaster gun. Often target of retaliation by his comrades."



FRONT



SIDE



BACK



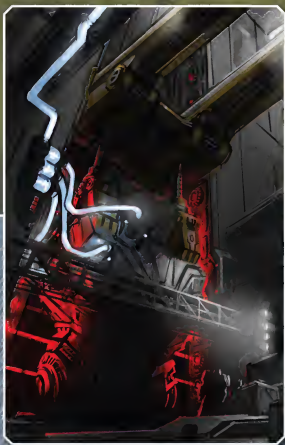
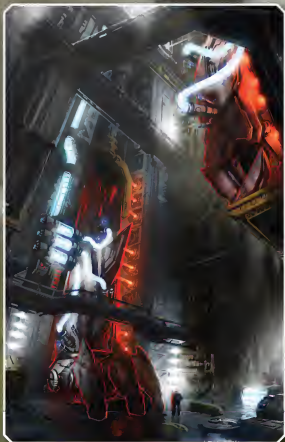
CHAPTER TEN
THE FINAL COUNTDOWN





The image presented on this page is of the magnificent, ornamental outer wall that functions as an entrance to the Autobot city of Iacon, with an Energon refinery cent to the right side of the Autobot. Here, able gamers utilize Megatron as a playable character, the revitalized Decepticon leader will attack Iacon, fighting his way through the city in order to obtain the shattered pieces of Triontron to reassemble him for his own ominous purposes. Capturing and holding Triontron is essential to the Autobot cause as the facility is nearly devoid of energy – and what little Energon remains in Triontron's broken pieces may be enough to power the Autobots' escape craft and depart from Cybertron.

Yet, in order to produce the Energon they've siphoned from the different sections of Triontron, the Autobots have refinery sites established around their capital city of Iacon—a city that before the Civil War was reminiscent of a utopia, yet now seems more similar to a dystopian wasteland. Since Triontron was powered by Megatron's sinister fuel, Dark Energon, the murky fuel must be processed into a useable form of Energon. "Visually," stated Jim Daly, High Noon's lead concept artist, "we wanted to really tell the feel of a modern oil refinery."



The artwork featured on the introductory page to this chapter portrays the "flying mode" of the Autobot Transport (featured in chapter seven) as the Autobot convoy conveys the fallen Trapticon in order to siphon off more of the giant robot's dark Energon; chunks of Trapticon's body are being drained for the powerful bit of Dark Energon that might still be coursing through the robot's cerebro-circuits.

This page features another variation of an early concept painting of Trapticon being drained of Dark Energon by the Autobots. This impressive rendering would have made quite a spectacle if the Decepticons (led by Starscream) were poised to lead an attack. Due to Starscream's incompetence, the assault would most likely have been ineffective.

Regardless, the three preproduction paintings featured on the left side of this spread are individual sketches that are tasked to hold Trapticon's parts: the mighty Decepticon's leg is featured in the top sketch, his torso is prominent in the middle picture, while his huge head (with its big, sharp, pointy teeth) is displayed on the bottom right. However, Megatron won't allow his sworn enemies to abscond with Energon from one of his very own fallen warriors, even if he has to conquer the entire Autobot Armada to do so.

Yet another concept proposal of the Autobot Armada transporting Trapticon. High Moon's designers were often encouraged to offer many different interpretations of the same scene. In this image, the amount of ships comprising the Autobot Armada that was conveying Trapticon were far more vast than was shown on the title page, rather than compact flying transports, in this image it appears that the Autobots utilized much larger support ships for this mission.





MEGATRON

In *War for Cybertron*, we witnessed Megatron's use of the substance known as "Dark Energon" when the Decepticons attacked the Autobots for control of their planet. Let's review: during these many skirmishes, Megatron dispatched the Autobot leader, Zeta Prime, who was then replaced by a novice commander (and one-time data clerk [1]), Optimus Prime. The Deception leader then utilized Dark Energon to corrupt the planet's core. In its weakened and infected state, Megatron strove to gain total control of Cybertron, and was determined to return it to a second Golden Age.

Having used Dark Energon to power his troops, Megatron now looks to defeat the Autobots by attacking their escape vessel, the Ark. The Autobots have suffered tremendous casualties during the civil war; they are about to witness the death of their planet, and it appears that they will suffer eviction from their home at the hands of their most hated enemies. Suffice to say, it appears that Megatron has won... although the Deception leader will endure his own series of setbacks—nearly losing the most fundamental essence of his being—his very "spark" (the Cybertronian equivalent of a soul)—during the course of *Fall of Cybertron*.





CHAPTER ELEVEN
STARSCREAM'S BETRAYAL



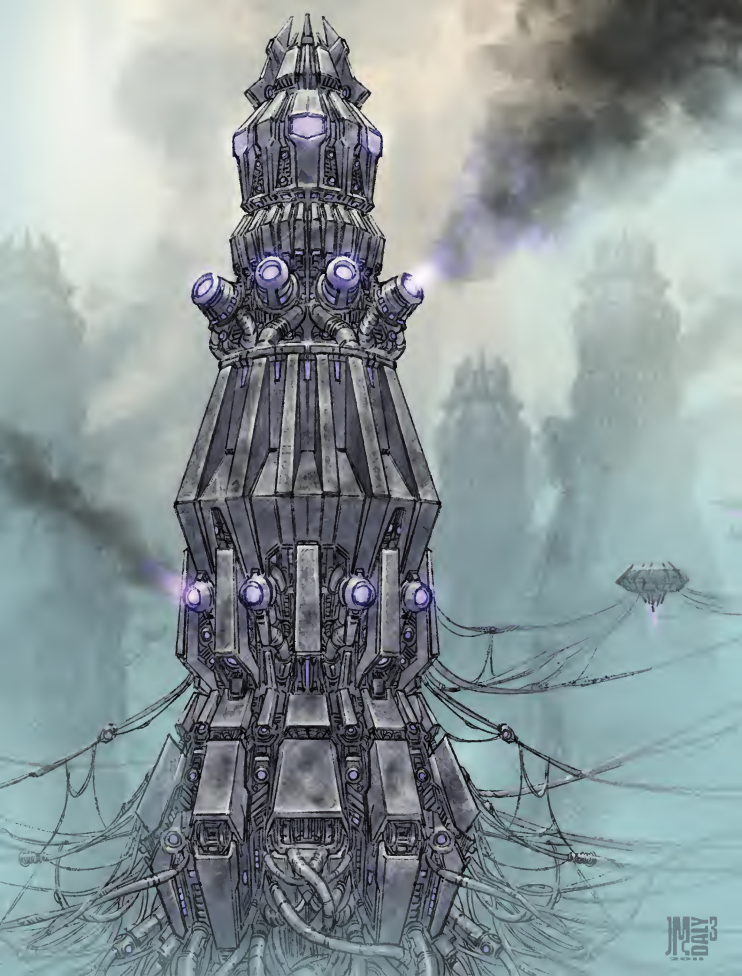


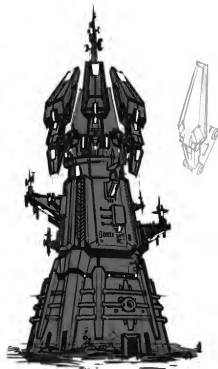
After Shockwave conducted a number of clandestine experiments on the Insecticons, the Decepticons' military operations commander allowed the technology that spawned Hardshell (for Bombshell in the GI canon), Kickback, Sharpshot (Shrapnel), and their clones to infest and permeate his own structures and experiments. At Shockwave's Tower in Kaon, the Insecticons' technology co-mingled with his laboratories, and it metamorphosed the atomic structure of his research facility. Many of his peers might suggest that by abusing the applied science of the Insecticons to impact and affect Shockwave's sophisticated Deception technology, the distinguished scientist weakened his sterling reputation.

However, in *Fall of Cybertron*, while we may observe that the Insecticons' technology has indeed overgrown Shockwave's lab and towers, it has also helped to further many of Shockwave's more curious experiments on Cybertronian life forms and has added a layer of mystery to his already inscrutable genius.

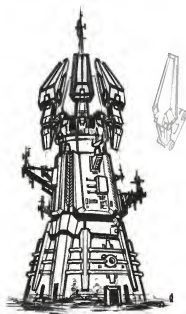
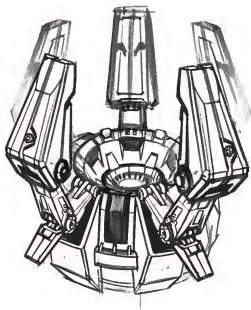
What is shown on this page is designer Aaron Limonick's concept painting of the magnificent elevator lift that takes its occupants down into the headquarters of the Decepticons' preeminent scientist: Shockwave's Lair. (An external shot of this command center is rendered in all its singular beauty on this chapter's title page).

A group of voracious, destructive techno-organic arthropods that burrowed through the crust of Cybertron and headed to the surface as a result of Megatron's corrupting the core of the planet with Dark Energon in *War for Cybertron*.





Limenick
[02-16-11]



The amount of care that High Moon Studios' designers take when rendering concept sketches of machinery that are essential props for the game is remarkable. On the left-hand page is a turret constructed by Jim Daly, the studio's lead concept artist, that functions as part of the landscape of Shockwave's Lair. The structure is a processing tower that excretes pollutants into the atmosphere as a result of the scientist's inscrutable experiments. The pollution discharged from these towers creates the haze and effluence that stagnates around the peculiar niche he's carved on the outskirts of Kaon.

On the right-hand side of the page is a series of five concept sketches used to render the all-important Space Bridge—showing how the device functions (opens, closes, etc.)—a prop so very essential to the plot that dozens of concept designs exist for this astonishing piece of technology.

Jim Daly's concept proposal for a floating pillbox—here, a floating encampment chock full of Decepticon forces—is a perfect example of the amount of dedication that High Moon's designers have for even the most minute of details in *Fall of Cybertron*. The studio drafted page after page of different pillboxes until they found one that seemed to best fit their needs for inclusion into the perfect place in the game. For, if this is a video game about Transformers, then shouldn't even the minor props possess a superb amount of detail? Furthermore, shouldn't they also reflect the essence of the character? Shouldn't these trifling props change or convert as well—or at the very least, perform some other function—whether dynamically (i.e. movement) or stylistically (i.e. aesthetics)? The detail given to rendering these mundane interactive items is testament to the studio refusing to settle for bare repetition. The studio simply won't re-use the same door, window, small building, hatch, etc., over and over throughout each level; they insist upon crafting these smaller props uniquely in order to maximize the sense that the game you're playing is a uniquely immersive experience.



The larger image on this page is of a hallway in Shockwave's laboratory (note the sinister-looking Insecticon hives lurking at the end of the tunnel). It's important to note the level of detail that High Moon utilized when constructing each and every element of the game. From pillboxes and light sconces, to hallway panels and ceiling tiles.



In *Fall of Cybertron*, Matt Tyege, the Game Director, "wished to establish different places to play, different settings and environments." This does not merely imply that High Moon wanted to connect unusually colored backgrounds for similarly constructed landscapes and cities, or affix some unique faction symbols or labels onto similar-looking buildings. The studio wanted every single environment in the game to be unique—from the driving areas on the outside of the Ark, to the heart of Autobot City, to the dense lining the floor of Rust, to what a gamer experiences in this level: aerial combat that exists individually high off the ground, set on the edge of the Decepticons' virulent city of Kaon.

Playing as Starscream, as a former Seeker aircraft, you indeed may be accustomed to the heights of the level, but perhaps not to the level's aforementioned pilboxes dotting the firmament. Held aloft by Energon, a few thin cables, and some tiny jets protruding from the bottom of the platforms, these armed bunkers [shown on the previous page] are chock full of Shockwave's troopers—and spell danger for the traitorous Starscream.

The image displayed on this page is from an unused concept sketch that the designers were intrigued with at the preproduction level. Originally, Starscream possessed his own laboratory [for all, he was a scientist (albeit a "jetfire") before joining the Decepticons.] and was going to pursue the construction of soldiers to construct his own military force. If you look closely at the image on this page, you'll witness Starscream in his laboratory manipulating the machinery necessary to manufacture his Decepticon combat troopers. So then, it's worth remembering that High Moon mines a host of ideas and concepts, they then review these various nuggets and ultimately choose only the most effective—both aesthetically and developmentally—for inclusion into featured areas which, when strung together, become levels within the narrative structure of the game. According to Tim Daly, "We jump all over and explore all these ideas [individually] before [the game] is put together."





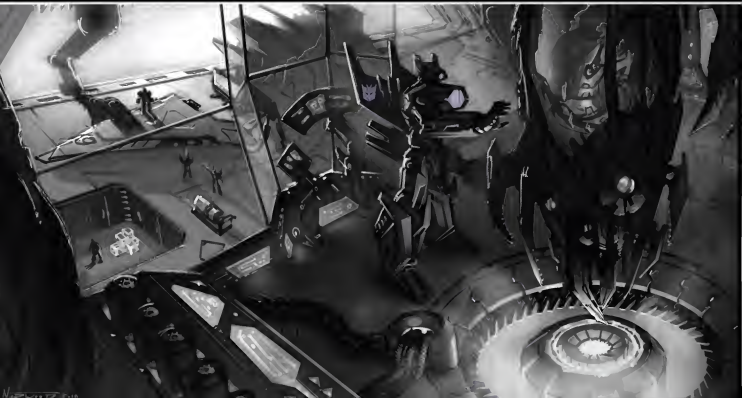
Whether developing an exterior wall of Shockwave's Lair (top left image), an interior hallway (top right), or... really, any external façade, interior display or prop, High Moon's designers tried particularly hard to retain Shockwave's unique aesthetic/countenance when rendering the scientist's "home."

Shockwave's body structure and physical appearance are so unique-looking relative to every other character in the game—any other Transformers in the canon—that the designers deliberately drafted buildings and selected pieces of Kaon's real estate to look like the addy-constructed purple Deception.

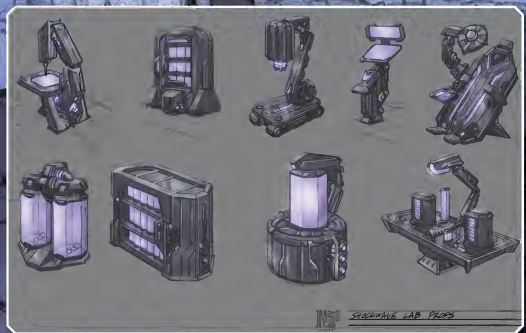
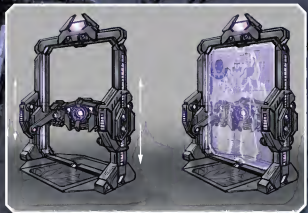
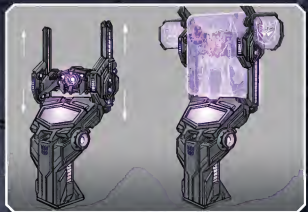
With his single cyclopean eye, his odd helmet and peculiar "ears" (note his head's repeated use in the top left image), and his protruding, light-up, translucent purple chest piece (note its use as the focal point in the image on the page before

this, and suggested in the image in the top right), Shockwave's Lair is subtly emblematic of its remarkable occupant; it appears as if elements of his own body were incorporated into this world. However, there is another unique influence upon the aesthetics of Shockwave's Lair: the insections.

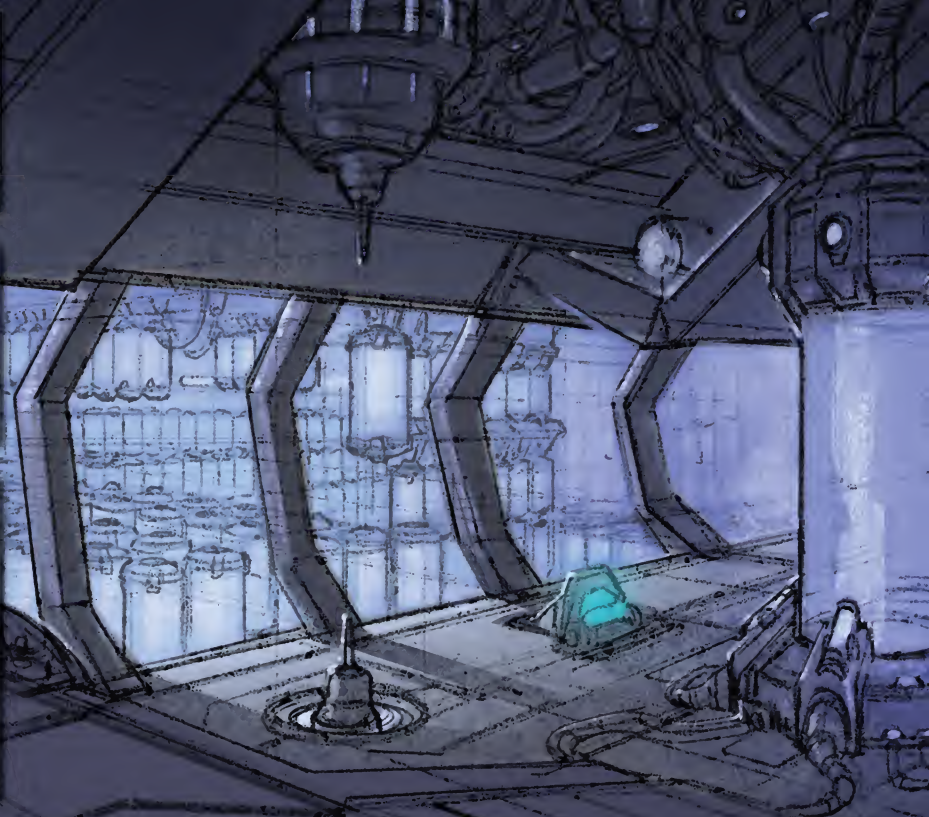
When viewing the image below, it's almost impossible not to mention the presence of an Insecticon influence on Shockwave's technology. The design team at High Moon has managed to concoct a perfect visual *mélange* of the two different styles to establish a close narrative relationship between the two groups.







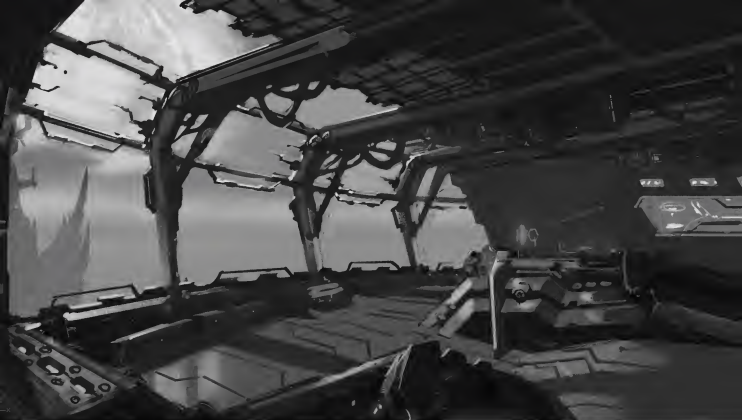
Shockwave's lab possesses a variety of scanning equipment, well-stocked laboratories (with uh, we might ask...?), carefully polished re-tured surfaces, and other assorted paraphernalia that allows the scientist the luxury of hosting many controversial Deception experiments (from his perspective, preferably on P.D.W.'s). As many Transformers know, Shockwave is responsible for developing the research that would one day allow Cybertronians to assume the ability to switch between their natural robot form and more than one alternate mode: what would be called "triple-changer" technology—but this would be developed in the distant future. Yet even at this early stage in the character's fictional history (before his experiments with the Ducons, with Sixshot, his future reign during the "Great Shutdown," etc.), many aficionados compare Shockwave to an evil scientist whose moral lapses have allowed him to achieve tremendous scientific success, ô la Dr. Frankenstein.



The top three images featured on the left of this splash page are concept designs for a security gate/security terminal. The gate moves up and down and is used to prevent trespassers from entering Shockwave's lab. Unfortunately, when Starscream invades this workshop, he makes use of a "former" Deception soldier's hand in order to utilize the deceased trooper's unique signature to enter the room.

Other props are featured below the security gate, props used by designers to help decorate the laboratory. The larger image that these props are imposed upon draws the gamer's eye toward (if they peer inside the tinted window) the tubes filled with samples of all sorts of objects that are useful for Shockwave's many curious experiments. Thankfully, the tubes are not translucent; I'm unsure exactly what the mad scientist of the Deceptions would place in these containers, but I'm quite positive that some of these would be terrible little presents that would fry the circuits of even the hardest of Autobot campaigners.





The image to the top left is High Moon's first stab at designing the Nemesis—a craft that was originally going to be built by Shockwave; he was the engineer who made nearly all of the Decepticons' concept technology. If scrutinized carefully, Transfans might notice that it does indeed look a bit like Shockwave himself.

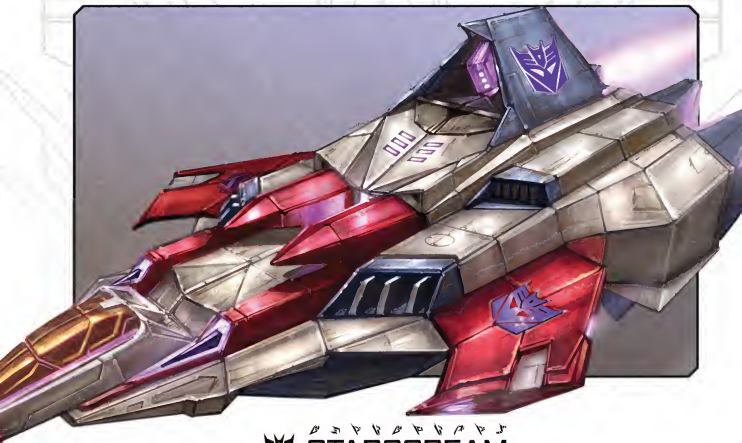
The image immediately underneath the Nemesis is a concept sketch of the damage that's been done around Shockwave's area of Kaon. Since

his experiments on the Insecticons began, they've been feeding off the existing structures in order to construct their very own buildings; their procedure: eat an established building to make their own hive.

The top and bottom right-hand images are of a room in the interior of Shockwave's base; it is also the exact place where Optimus Prime and Grimlock have an important conversation about the concept of power.







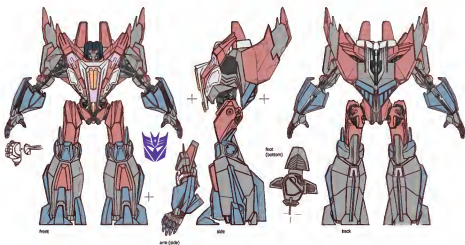
STARScream



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Marked by the traitorous ambition of a seasoned usurper, the commander of the Seekers and former scientist known as Starscream—upon learning of Megatron's pursuit of tyrannical power and limitless glory—transformed himself into the Deception aerospace commander. A fierce and formidable air warrior, Starscream sold his services to Megatron where he will bide his time until the moment is right for him to seize control of the Deceptions and ultimately... conquer Cybertron. According to his Generation One tech spec biography, Starscream "believes [the] Deceptions should rely more on guile and speed rather than brute force to defeat [the] Autobots"; for, even though he is "...very good at what he does, [he] sometimes overrates himself."

Regarding gameplay, few playable characters in *Full of Cybertron* possess Starscream's combination of maneuverability, stealth, and raw power. It should be noted that throughout the course of the game's extensive narrative, Starscream will finally be afforded the opportunity to become leader the Deceptions—for good or bad—and the result of his leadership skills will have far-reaching effects for the Transformers' canon to both Autobot and Deception alike. Starscream's entry in IDW's reprinted *Transformers: More than Meets the Eye* trade paperbacks demonstrates the Seeker commander's traitorous philosophy of governance: "Megatron may have been a great warrior, but he lacks the style and subtlety that I've mastered. With me in command, the Deceptions would truly have someone to look to for the leadership needed to win this war... and who wouldn't rather be looking at me than Megatron's bullet-headed grinace?" Only time will tell how his actions will color the Autobot-Deception civil war...



CHAPTER TWELVE
GRIMLOCK SMASH





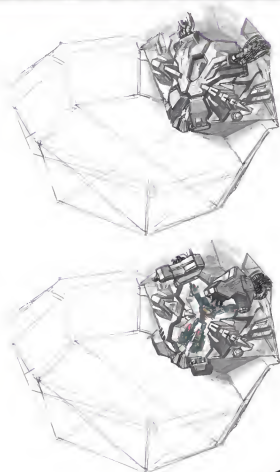
As a scientist, Shockwave's research is of paramount importance to the narrative arc that takes place within *Fall of Cybertron*. The Deception military operations commander's experiments with a Space Bridge portal leads him to discover a slew of fierce, carbon-based life forms (dinosaurs) inhabiting the energy-rich third planet of a solar system (Earth) which rotates around a yellow-dwarf (our sun). Megatron orders Shockwave to build a portal to this planet, where the Deceptions ultimately propose to pillage the world of its ample resources.

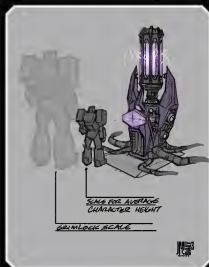
Infamous for a diverse array of hideous experiments, the electrical circuits of Autobot and Decepticon alike freeze in fear as they enter his lair—a chilling, antiseptic, unsettling place that perfectly matches the demeanor of its lone inhabitant, Shockwave, the mad professor. Whether hosting Autobot prisoners of war—who are highly disposable subjects—or Decepticon "volunteers" who've failed to please Megatron, Shockwave believes that the ends justify the means; here, science trumps morality.

But for now, by utilizing his cool logic and superior intellect, Shockwave's experiments with Space Bridge technology have afforded him glimpses into other realms in order to obtain images of these worlds' native life forms. No Deception has ever seen a prisoner of war leave Shockwave's

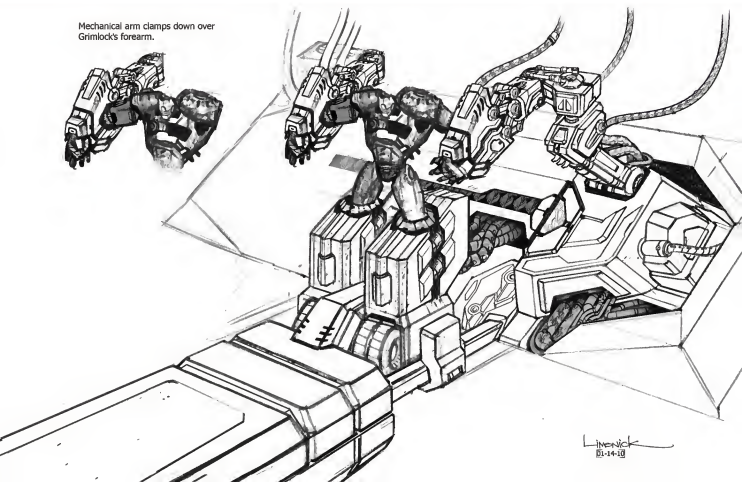
laboratory in the same state as when they entered: whether dead, inactive, or altered beyond recognition, the mad genius cannot help but push the boundaries of biotechnological advancement.

On this page, designers Aaron Limonick, Edward Marinov, Jim Daly, and Norwood Cole have rendered the original concept artwork for Grimlock's holding tank (top left—judged to be "not big enough"), a hanging containment device for Dinobot Swaoop (top middle-right—it simply looked "better" when suspended in open space), an interact terminal for Grimlock (to "smash"—top far-right), and the manner in which the designers worked out how Grimlock's containment unit actually functioned. High Moon's designers often work out on paper how props functioned (bottom right) well before these pieces are handed to the animators or modelers to render the final product. Lead Storyboard Artist Ed Marinov LOVES to show how these forces work (note the two-sketch draft of Grimlock's containment unit to the immediate right).





Mechanical arm clamps down over
Grimlock's forearm.







The picture to the left is a concept painting designed by José Emroca Flores that explicates how a detailed Insecticon hive works—if you look closely, you'll witness images of individual Insecticons inside the pod's translucent windows. Reminiscent of a 1950s "nuclear monster" science fiction movie (e.g. *Them!* (1954); giant irradiated ants), these preproduction images explain how the Insecticons manifested on the surface, since High Moon hadn't decided if the hives originally were bombs or invasion units.

Since original concept paintings portrayed Insecticon aesthetics a bit more organically (note Aaron Limonick's chilling image above) or mechanically (witness Billy King's more standardized interpretation below) than they were comfortable with, Jim Daly explained that the studio eventually landed on a mixture of the two styles: "Up close, gamers will be able to notice the metallic structure and influence of a Cybertronian birth, but from a distance, you'll register the organic high notes—the mushiness and dripping nature that is the Insecticons."



Ramon Limonick was a Concept Artist the studio often utilized to set the mood, tone, and sensibility for a particular scene. This is one of his first renderings of Shockwave's tower [that protrudes out of his lair]. You'll notice that all of the floating pillboxes surrounding the stronghold would be revised into what is currently incorporated into the gameplay. Since this was a painting that was used to establish mood, the question the studio asked its designers was, "How do we blend the insecticon aesthetic into the canyon on Kaon where Shockwave's facility already exists?"

A tall order for sure, Jim Daly and Matt Tieger believed wholeheartedly that whenever they asked their designers to respond to a request or render a difficult piece of concept artwork [Limonick's work is testament to this petition], the team responded with their characteristic skill and aplomb; they always translated the mood expertly. And capturing the perfect mood is as important in a complex, multi-layered video game as it is in a Hollywood film or bestselling novel; accuracy when apprehending the spirit of [the sense of] place—the *deus loci*—is everything.



LIMONICK
01-11-11



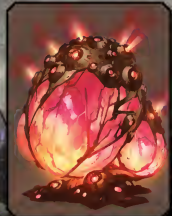
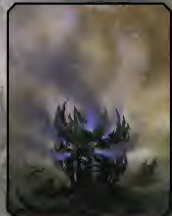
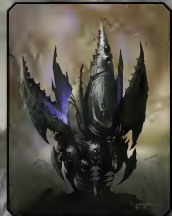
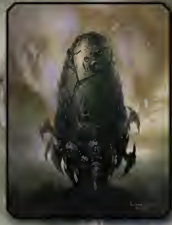
Recording it? Jim Daly, high Moon Studios' lead concept artist on *Fall of Cybertron*, "there were a few concept pieces of art that our designers truly understood perfectly. They captured an accurate mood for exactly what we were going for; there are a few concept pieces of art that these artists [namely GDT, [Eamon] Linbeck did this well, by translating the mood very closely to what we were looking for... he nailed it."

When playing the final product, it may appear as if the design team "nailed it" a good 99.9% of the time. But how did these artists arrive at such a high degree of success? Their eventual triumph is a result of rendering an inordinate amount of concept sketches—many of them appearing in the pages of this book. A few of these concepts were kept and turned into ideas, playable characters, supporting T.I. (artificial intelligence [whether enemy or ally]), settings, etc., yet many of these were not utilized.

For instance, on the right side of the splash are multiple early concept designs of Insecticon "egg layers" which [again] help support the fact that High Moon's designers took their time when crafting even the most smallest of things. Rarog's image on the left is a detailed "early" drawing of one of these egg layers—showing not only its form but its function

[note the Insecticon eggs littering the foreground and background], while three of the four aforementioned images organized vertically on the right side of this splash are actual, functioning objects that are utilized in-world; they're located within the frames of view for *Fall of Cybertron*. From their use as fighting pods to their functioning as explosive props (a discarded concept, the designers performed admirably.

Unfortunately for Dugout Commander Grinlock, as the powerful Autobots escapes Shockwave's clutches and smashes these pods, Insecticon clones pour out and blot the landscape. Yet, here's a fascinating aspect of High Moon's approach to Insecticon gameplay (via their T.I.): when an Insecticon is busy fighting a fearsome, superior opponent such as Grinlock, these Cybertronian bugs are dispatched with ease; a dog shaking fleas off of his coat. But when facing a smaller Autobot such as Jazz, even Insecticon clones pose a valid threat. Autobots should heed this warning: do not dismiss the Insecticons as a weak, ally threat that can only overwhelm you with sheer numbers; they are quite powerful in their own right.



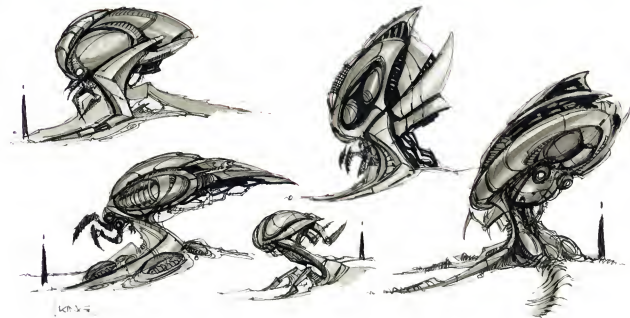


The image featured on this splash page is rendered by Narvosa Cole and is of Shockwave's tower. It's essentially an establishing mood shot of what it looks like to be located in that area, a far-reaching vista that showcases the mixture of Shockwave's technology and Insecticon aesthetics.

If you scrutinize the strip of sketches on the bottom half of the spread, these are nascent concepts for Insecticon technology as rendered by designer Billy King. Early in the construction process, High Moon allowed their team to concoct a bevy of fun preproduction concept sketches that were insect-themed. Smacking of H.R. Giger's biomechanical influence [the artist most famous for designing characters in Ridley Scott's *Alien* films], these superlative sketches—and the

recurring use of Autobot Bumblebee for scale—helped the team to examine the designers' preferred direction with the Insecticon team and their army of clones. These many curious preproduction sketches are continued on the following page, [again] allowing High Moon's stable of uber-talented designers to flex their creative muscles.

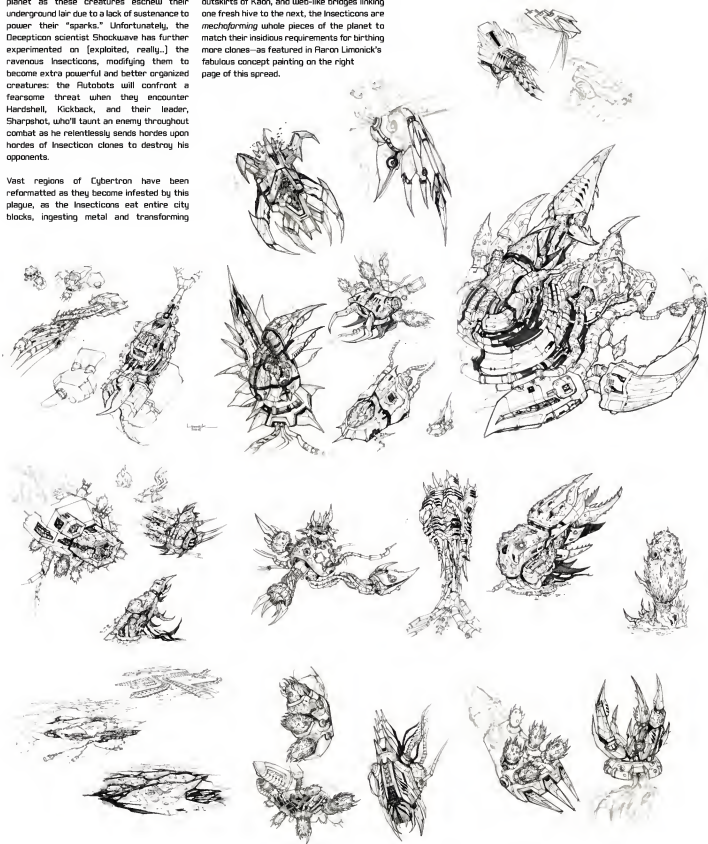
Jim Daly provides his thoughts on this exploration process: "We had lots and lots of concept sketches, drawings, and paintings of the Insecticons because it was very important for us to get this right so it doesn't look repetitive or boring. We've ALL seen *Alien*, and there's an abundance of bio-mechanical stuff in there... it took us a WHILE to get it RIGHT."



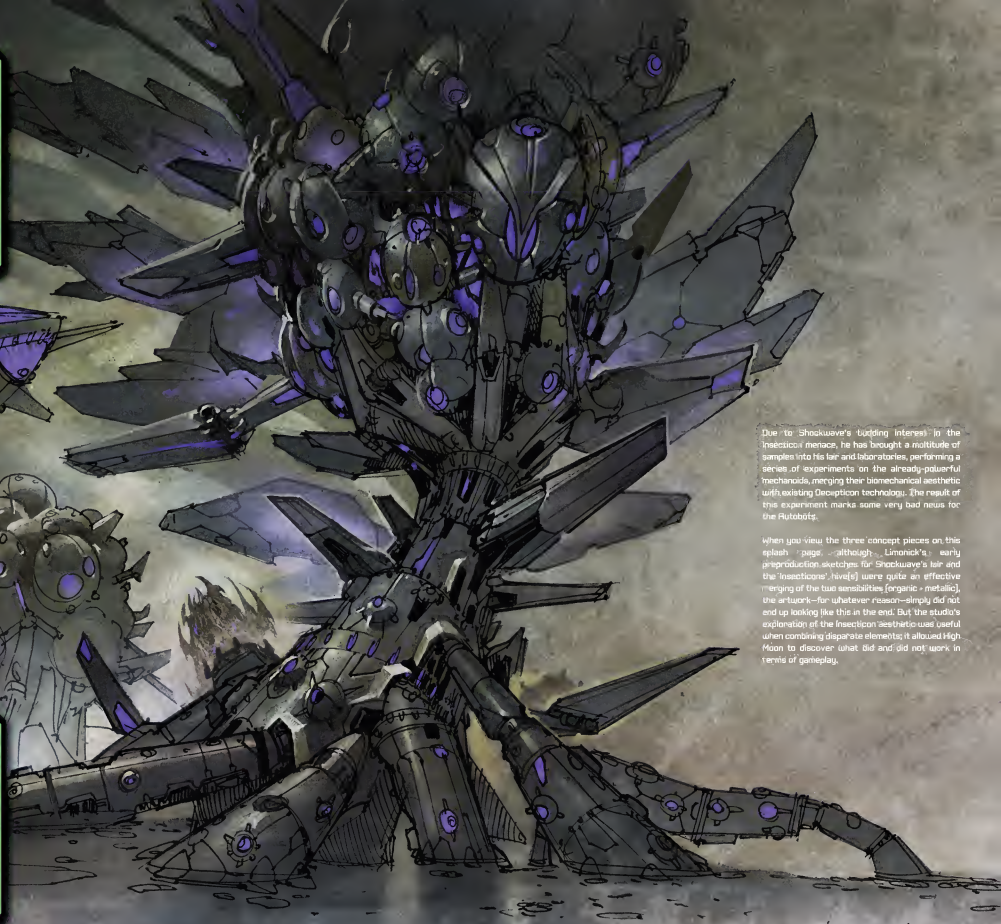
The Insecticon threat reached Cybertron's surface due to the widespread menace of Dark Energon. Throngs of these voracious, techno-organic arthropods plague the skin of the planet as these creatures eschew their underground lair due to a lack of sustenance to power their "sparks." Unfortunately, the Decepticon scientist Shockwave has further experimented on [explained, really.] the ravenous Insecticons, modifying them to become extra powerful and better organized creatures: the Autobots will confront a fearsome threat when they encounter Handshell, Kickback, and their leader, Sharpshot, who'll taunt an enemy throughout combat as he relentlessly sends hordes upon hordes of Insecticon clones to destroy his opponents.

Vast regions of Cybertron have been reformatted as they become infested by this plague, as the Insecticons eat entire city blocks, ingesting metal and transforming

landscapes to match their own requirements—a place to house their budding swarm of potential brothers-in-arms. With their cocoons and hives dotting reformatted buildings on the outskirts of Kaon, and web-like bridges linking one fresh hive to the next, the Insecticons are *mechaforming* whole pieces of the planet to match their insidious requirements for birthing more clones—as featured in Aaron Limonick's fabulous concept painting on the right page of this spread.







Due to Shockwave's budding interest in the Insecticon menace, he has brought a multitude of samples into his lab and laboratories, performing a series of experiments on the already-potentful mechanoids, merging their biomechanical aesthetic with existing Decepticon technology. The result of this experiment marks some very bad news for the Autobots.

When you view the three concept pieces on this splash page, - although - Limonick's early production sketches for Shockwave's lab and the 'Insecticons' (labeled) were quite an effective merging of the two sensibilities (organic - metallic), the artwork - for whatever reason - simply did not end up looking like this in the end. But the studio's exploration of the Insecticon aesthetic was useful when combining disparate elements; it allowed High Moon to discover what did and did not work in terms of gameplay.

LIMONICK
02-05-10





E S T A B L I S H E D

GRIMLOCK

According to the Dreamwave Comics continuity, before the founding of the Dinobots, Grimlock presided as leader of the Lightning Strike Coalition (Force)—an Autobot sub-team comprised of him and the following team members: Slug, Sludge, Snarl, and Swoop. The L.S.C. utilized guerilla tactics to accomplish their missions, and they were one of the most successful of the elite fighting forces on all of Cybertron. After Shockwave adapted these five robots' alternate modes to mimic the appearance of planet Earth's most frightening creatures, the robots broke loose of their shackles and Grimlock asserted his authority over his former teammates once again. Thus, the Dinobots were born.

So then, to reiterate, in *Fall of Cybertron*, the Dinobots were once Cybertronians—members of the Lightning Strike Coalition Force—who were subjected to a series of experiments run by Shockwave, the Decepticons' cold and calculating cylopean military operations commander. Using Space Bridge technology, Shockwave scoured an untold number of planets inhabited by sentient life-forms searching for the fiercest, most formidable living creatures in the known universe in order to utilize their frightening appearances in his scientific procedures to create a new breed of fearsome, powerful warriors. Peering through time, Shockwave became enthralled by the "terrible lizards" of Earth's prehistoric times—the dinosaurs—choosing to use the reptiles' intimidating physical attributes when configuring his experimental subjects' alternate modes.

Thus, Shockwave unwittingly created one of the Autobots' most fearsome fighting units: the ill-tempered Slug (whose alternate mode is a triceratops), the gregarious Swoop (a pterodactyl), the dim-witted Sludge (an apatosaurus), the reserved loner Snarl (a stegosaurus), and the Dinobot Commander Grimlock (a fearsome tyrannosaurus rex).

Although Grimlock cannot change into his alternate mode at will, Grimlock instead accumulates rage as he battles his foes. When enough rage is amassed, he reverts into his familiar dinosaur mode, which results in a massive amount of damage inflicted upon his enemies. Armed with his Energo-sword and shield in robot mode, a lack of ranged weapons at first seems a hindrance...until his bestial fury is finally released.

As a special added treat, for the first time in more than twenty-five years, Gregg Berger—the voice actor who provided Grimlock's distinctive voice in *The Transformers* animated program of the 1980s—will reprise his role as the frighteningly effective dinobot commander.

Unfortunately, like Bumblebee, Grimlock encounters problems with his vocal processors—both in *Fall of Cybertron*, and in the *Transformers* canon where "a recurring viral glitch in [his] vocal processors often gives him a characteristic speech impediment!" (from IDW's reprinted *Transformers: More Than Meets The Eye* trade paperback).

Although Grimlock is the lone playable Dinobot character in *Fall of Cybertron*, High Moon has released a DLC (downloadable content) pack featuring the Dinobots that can be used in the game's multiplayer mode. This DLC—called the "Dinobot Destructor Pack"—features Grimlock, Slug, Snarl, and Swoop as playable characters.

*Dinosaurs are not lizards—they are an entirely separate group of reptiles.



SLUDGE

At first blush, Sludge appears to represent many of the qualities of his Earthly alternate mode—that of a gentle, shy apatosaurus—where the Dinobot jungle warrior/demolitions expert would “...rather spend time relaxing by water and learning about Earth animals than fight Decepticons” [taken from the Datatracks of Grimlock, dinobot commander, in IDW’s reprinted *Transformers: More than Meets the Eye* trade paperback]. However, when reluctantly urged to action by his peers and Grimlock, Sludge will “make [his powerful] presence known—[his] footstep can be heard and felt in a 3-mile radius” [from his G1 tech spec (ca. 1985)].

“Stomp your enemy, crush him under your feet,” is the motto of the model Dinobot that his comrades dearly wish Sludge would exemplify, yet his low intelligence and lack of speed often interfere with his combat skills, for Sludge is “slow, [and] not too clever—[he’s] often victim of the calamities he causes.” Regardless, in optimal conditions—both mentally and physically—Sludge is the second-strongest Dinobot, and in battle he has the potential to become both “terrifying and unstoppable.” [He] can exert 40,000 psi via feet—enough to shatter a bridge. [Possesses] immense strength and endurance (... and is) adept at fighting in water, swamp, and jungle.”





SLUG

With the motto of "I have no need for friends, [and] even less for enemies," the cantankerous, surly Dinobot named Slug (known to Generation One fans the world over as "Slag") gained infamy in the Transformers canon for being the most adversarial of Grimlock's already-combative bunch of Dinobot commandos. Slug's personality is eclipsed by his hair-trigger temper, and his G1 biography (ca. 1985) ably assists in rounding out the Dinobot Flamethrower's character: "[Slug [Slag]] enjoys melting enemies into pools of liquid metal. Like his fellow Dinobots, [he] resents authority. [He's] disruptive—often brawls with comrades."

Although most Autobots give Slug—whose alternate mode is that of a triceratops—a wide berth, they simply can't argue with the cantankerous Dinobot's power. According to the details related on his tech spec, Slug "...shoots 3000° C flame up to 80 feet from [his] mouth. [He also possesses] enormous strength—[he] can shatter a brick building with head... [yet he's] rash, [and] not too bright." Unfortunately, due to Slug's "nasty, mean-spirited" nature, "often the other Autobots won't help when he's in trouble." This lack of support from his Autobot brethren frequently places the entire Dinobot troupe in danger.





SNARL

The Dinobots' desert warrior, Snarl, is characterized as "...an unhappy loner of few words and fewer opinions [who] finds joy only in battle" (from his G1 tech spec bio). His alternate dinosaur mode is that of a stegosaurus—a form that Snarl fiercely despises and resents. Like Sludge, Snarl is also slow and exudes an uncooperative nature; like Slug, this nature often hinders other Autobots from assisting him in battle. Yet in dinosaur mode, Snarl is ready and armed for combat—a situation where he excels—since he possesses "...large golden plates on [his] spinal assembly [that] are solar collectors... [and his] strength increases tenfold in sunlight. [Furthermore, Snarl's] tail can shatter [a] 20-foot concrete cube... [and his] armored hide resists most missiles."

Due to their anti-social personalities and revulsion for authority (one wonders how Grimlock manages to lead such a motley crew), Snarl and his Dinobot brethren lurk on the fringes of the Autobot army; the Dinobots are often brought into the fray when things are going quite wrong and Optimus Prime wishes to turn the tide of a battle. It appears that the Dinobots are happiest when engaging the enemy, where they'll destroy anything sporting a Deception insignia on it in combat. Each Dinobot might echo Snarl's heartbreaking motto: "Only in war is there happiness."





SWOOP

From his G1 tech spec biography, Swoop believes that "fear can hit targets unreachable to bullets." Swoop is a Dinobot whose personality is marked by contrasts. The Dinobot bombardier is gregarious, affable, and genuinely friendly—often acting as the Dinobots' ambassador to the rest of the Autobots—yet his terrifying Earth mode as a pterodactyl often scares both his loyal friends and his staunch enemies. Unfortunately—according to his G1 tech spec bio, "...this Dinobot's kind, good-natured side [is] disguised by his horrifying [alternate] form..." [to the extent that] even his comrades shy away."

However, Swoop deeply comprehends the serious and important nature of his function as the lone flying Dinobot: he is one of the few Autobots who possesses self-propelled flight. When in the midst of one of his many bombing runs, Swoop takes great pleasure when frightening his enemies [as stated in his original tech spec bio]: "Enjoys watching enemies scatter before him as he dives down from sky... considers spreading fear his greatest weapon."





INSECTICONS

With their motto of "Eat all you can, burn all the rest!" the Insecticons function as agents of the Decepticons who ally themselves with Megatron's forces when it serves their own rapacious purposes. In *Fall of Cybertron*, their presence in Shockwave's area of Kaon is readily apparent; they've mechaformed large swaths of real estate outside the city, where their baleful bridges and ominous hive pads haunt a darkening landscape.

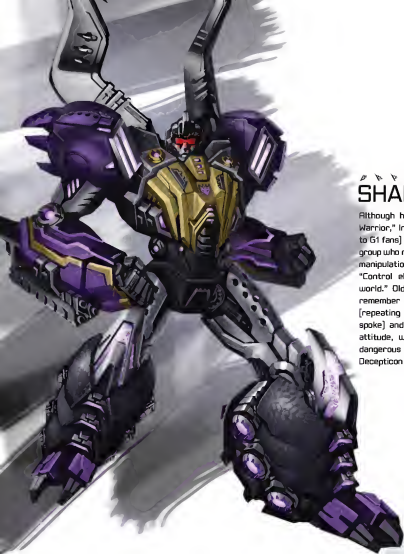
As a collective group, the Insecticons' most recent tech spec biography was provided on the characters' 25th Anniversary Transformers Universe Toys "R" Us Exclusive three-pack of Hasbro action figure re-issues (ca. 2009 [originally produced ca. 1985]). This profile provided aficionados and casual fans alike with a succinctly rendered characterization of this triumvirate of terrifying Insecticons—and their powerful swarm of Insecticon clones (the "red-shirted crew members" of their forces). The profile reads as follows: "Even in an army full of greedy, sadistic, bizarre individuals, the Insecticons stand out. They fight for nothing other than their own hunger. They are loyal to no one other than themselves. Though they occasionally fight alongside the other Decepticons, betrayal is an inevitable factor. The fact remains, however, that they are simply too powerful and effective to be easily disposed of, and so they remain to plague Autobots and Decepticon alike."

When fighting as Cliffjumper, Jazz, and (eventually) Grimlock, gamers will begin to recognize that there are essentially three different manifestations of Insecticon: Hardshell, Kickback, and Sharpshot.



HARDSHELL

Insecticon Hardshell ("Bombshell" in the G1 canon, whose name was changed due to licensing issues in 2009) functions as the group's psychological warrior, where his province is the realm of the Cybertronian brain. With the motto of "The mind is my playpen," Hardshell is known for "...turn[ing] foes into helpless accomplices by injecting cerebro-shells into their heads [(whether) robot or human] with his stinger... [which] gives him control of their minds." Although Hardshell's personality—like all of the three Insecticons—was defined in the *Sunbow/Marvel Productions* animated series of the 1980's, *The Transformers*, there are ghostly echoes of this character's personality in *Fall of Cybertron*, where he is essentially the same character who possesses "...a cruel sense of humor... [and] arms himself by having his victims debase themselves."



SHARPSHOT

Although his basic function is "Electronic Warrior," Insecticon SharpsHOT ["Shrapnel" to G1 fans] is also the de-facto leader of the group who reveled in wreaking havoc with his manipulation of electricity; his motto: "Control electricity and you control the world." Old school Transformers fans will remember his characteristic vocal quirk [repeating the last word of every line he spoke] and—most importantly—his sadistic attitude, which marked him as a highly-dangerous opponent to Autobot and Deception alike.

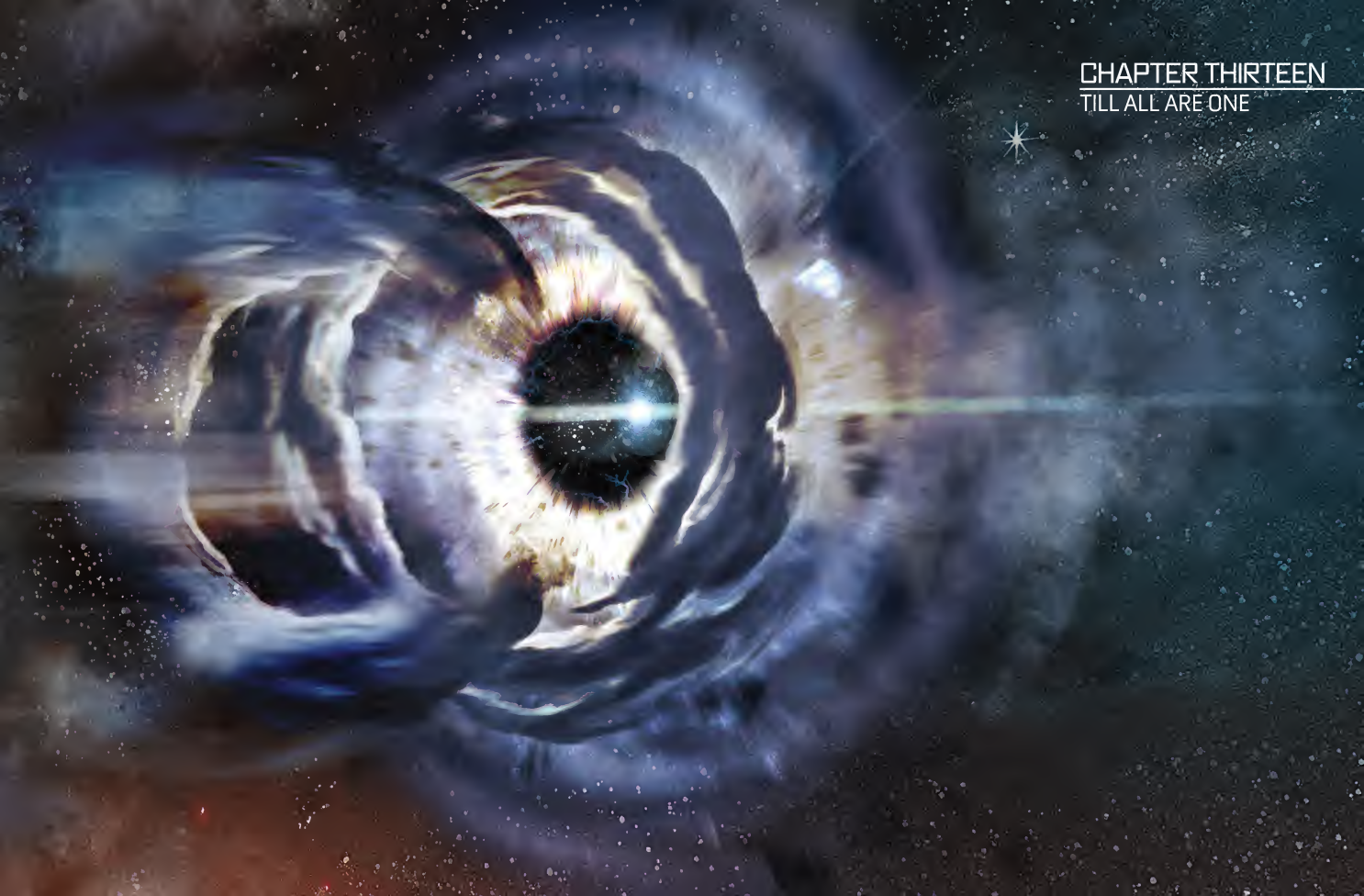
SharpsHOT's ideology is defined in his original tech spec biography as follows: "The noise of war and the screams of his foes are music to this loathsome Insecticon's audio-modules..." SharpsHOT is also quite a powerful adversary, since he possesses: "[a] piercing battle cry... [which] can be heard 8 miles away, in insect mode [he] can use antennae to control almost any electrical device. In robot mode [he] can attract lightning bolts to antennae and shoot them out [his] hands."

KICKBACK

The second of the three Insecticons, Insecticon Kickback, functions as the team's espionage agent. His modus operandi is based upon a philosophy of distrust, where he believes that "friend is another word for fool." When tasked to obtain secretive or confidential information for a superior, Kickback acts "charming but cruelly clever..." [and he] makes friends so he can influence them to do his bidding by digging up facts he can hold against them..." Although this manipulative aspect of his personality rarely manifested itself in the G1 canon, Kickback's use of his powerful legs was far more apparent, for "...in insect mode [he] can jump 40 ft. for a distance of .1 mile... [and] kick a hole in 3/4" steel."



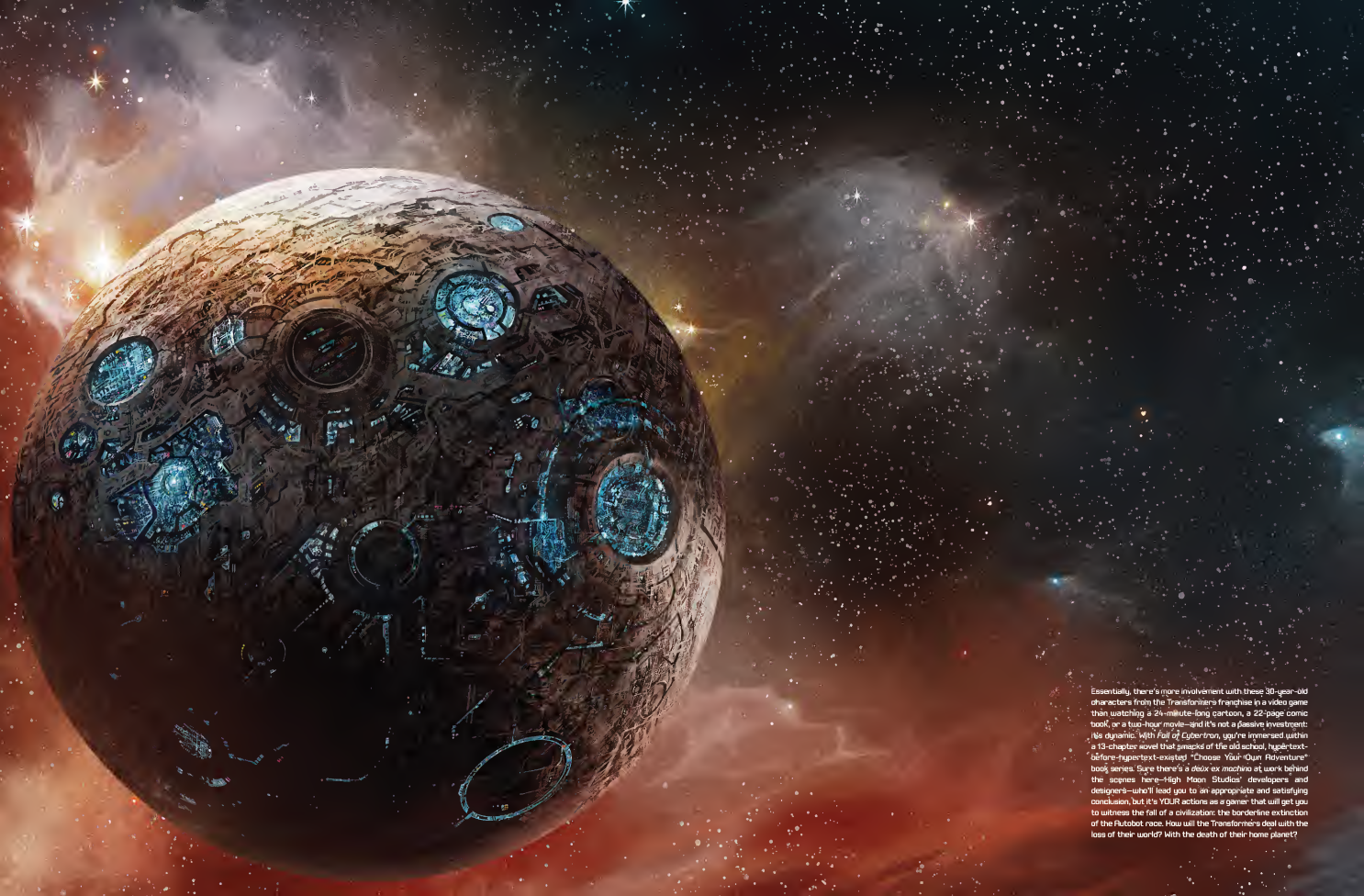
CHAPTER THIRTEEN
TILL ALL ARE ONE




The Ark is the Nemesis' antithesis. Like its Decepticon foil, the Autobots' ship is a spectacular expression of High Moon's design language. Similar in its aesthetic appearance to Optimus Prime's Durbinwell, the Ark possesses a softer bevel in general, with rounder, safer edges: "It doesn't look like you'd cut yourself on the Autobot stuff... it feels more like armor than threatening knives," states Matt Tager. "We went back to the GI Ark, and although we put our own spin on it, we retained its golden color—its pretty metallic color." So then, where the Ark suggests safety and gleams like protective armor, the Nemesis is an imposing living weapon.

As is suggested at the close of Chapter One, the design of the Decepticon flagship, the Nemesis, is reminiscent of a familiar opponent: the last "boss" the Autobots battled in *War for Cybertron*. Upon close inspection, and as you advance through the levels of *Fall of Cybertron*, it is revealed that the Nemesis is actually the infamous Decepticon warrior, Triglacion. It appeared that over time, the Autobots have systematically removed Energon from Triglacion to fund their escape from Cybertron via the Ark, and so Megatron retrieved the one-time Decepticon assault base back from his foes. Due to the extreme, recurring drain on Triglacion's power reserves, the massive Decepticon lost his ability to switch back to his disc-robot mode: he was permanently trapped in spaceship form.





Essentially, there's more involvement with these 30-year-old characters from the Transformers franchise in a video game than watching a 24-minute-long cartoon, a 22-page comic book, or a two-hour movie—and it's not a passive investment: No dynamic. With *Fall of Cybertron*, you're immersed within a 13-chapter novel that smacks of the old school, hyper-text-driven hyper-text-driven "Choose Your Own Adventure" book series. Sure, there's a dash of *Mad Max* at work behind the scenes here—High Moon Studios' developers and designers—who'll lead you to an appropriate and satisfying conclusion, but it's YDLR actions as a gamer that will get you to witness the fall of a civilization, the borderline extinction of the Autobot race. How will the Transformers deal with the loss of their world? With the death of their home planet?



The most important image that gamers witness in the final level of *Fall of Cybertron* is that of the open Space Bridge floating outside the window of the Ark's command platform. This potent device demands an explanation of what it does and how it operates.

In attempting to enhance the means of standard space travel, scientists on Cybertron worked industriously to develop a method for effectively "bridging the distance" between two locations in space.

One of the most powerful technological advancements in Cybertronian history occurred eons ago during the Golden Age of Cybertron—resulting from a bravura performance by the planet's most brilliant scientists. However, the specifications of this revolutionary invention which allowed Cybertronian engineers to triumph over the laws of space and time (e.g. instantaneous transport between any two places in the known galaxy) had been utterly lost from the annals of recorded history. Known as "space bridge technology," this equipment allowed for the custodians of Cybertronian civilization to disperse their culture and ideology across the cosmos. Therefore, the Cybertronian people and their dogma were spread far-and-wide across the universe via a network of sophisticated "space bridges."

Unfortunately, the space bridge network collapsed millennia ago, what remains are artifacts of an ancient Cybertronian civilization. All of the secrets and science of space bridge technology were assumed to be lost. Until Shockwave, the brilliant Decepticon scientist discovered one last space bridge that still functions; slowly, he has learned its profound secrets...

Fast forward to the final, epic scene in *Fall of Cybertron*.

Tow cables erupt from the bottom of the Nemesis and hook onto the Ark, and the resultant impact ruptures the ship's hull, compelling the Autobots to desperately drive across the outer shell of the craft to save their race from total annihilation. The Decepticons race down the tow cables and board the Ark, while the Autobots fight for their very survival. In the background, the Space Bridge hovers: the last hope for Optimus' band of brave adventurers.

As Optimus Prime and Megatron engage in a final showdown, Bumblebee leaps in front of his noble leader and takes the blast meant to extinguish the Autobot Commander's spark. He lies at the feet of Optimus Prime, his life force ebbing out of his body, witnessing the Ark and Nemesis hurtling toward the Space Bridge's open portal in the hopes that he may still survive. The two crafts tumble toward this tear in the fabric of space, unknown what events will unfold.

Game Director Matt Tiegner had this to say to potential consumers (e.g. gamers who might not be Transformers fans), in order to encourage them to pick up *Fall of Cybertron*: "Forget everything you know about the Transformers franchise—Transformers toys and Michael Bay's films and everything that's come before. Just consider for a moment a video game that allows you to access your automobile at any moment—instead of just in certain levels, a game where the core tactical choices are movement based. Now you must also picture a game where every character is designed to be a unique experience—with access to a different vehicle, and a different special ability. That's the essence of this game: variety. Variety of a tactical nature as well. By the way, this just so happens to be a Transformers title."

Tiegner cited Sam Raimi's *Spider-Man* film of 2002 as a companion and inspiration when constructing *Fall of Cybertron*: "The first Spider-Man reboot did a great job of hitting all the layers of fans. And so is our development team at High Moon," stated "Tieg" (as he is known by his friends), an unassuming, humble genius of a man with a magnificent beard. "We're trying to hit all the layers of fans. I remember watching *Spider-Man* and thinking 'This is a great action movie!'. With a great, balanced narrative. AND the director gave it time to breathe as well. That's what I see with *Fall of Cybertron*. There's stuff in the game for ALL of them." Tiegner comprehends the most cunning and oft-forgotten facet of narrative storytelling: you don't always have to point (or shoot) a gun at the antagonist. Sure, it's cool to have huge robots beat the snot out of each other, but it's NOT important to take a measured pause in order to either reflect or provide some all-important explication.

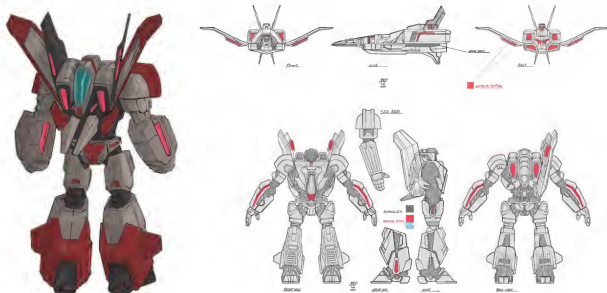


JETFIRE



In *War for Cybertron*, Jetfire belonged to a group of Seekers that partnered with Starscream. With a background in science, Jetfire warned the Decepticons of the dangers of Dark Energon and was ignored. When Starscream pledged his allegiance to Megatron, the scientist and explorer parted ways with the Seekers and partnered with the Autobots who welcomed him with open arms; he was one of the heroes of the Cybertronian Civil war who helped to defeat Trygonicon.

Jetfire is a valuable resource to the Autobots in *Fall of Cybertron*, since—now more than ever—he is one of the few members of their faction who is capable of self-propelled flight.





CHAPTER FOURTEEN
DATA ARCHIVES

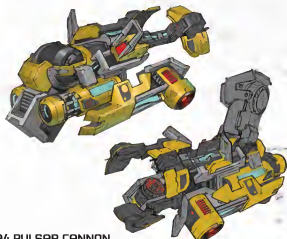


WEAPONS & UPGRADES

The gauntlet was thrown down in-house for High Moon Studios' designers to concoct new weaponry for *Fall of Cybertron*, wishing to make the playable Transformers characters' primary and secondary armaments both revolutionary and highly effective. The designers gleefully accepted and deftly conquered the challenge, as evinced by the bevy of stellar armaments gamers can now equip and upgrade as they negotiate through the three magnificent acts—the 13 superlative chapters—of High Moon's techno-organic drama. As an added bonus, both factions of Transformers—the Heroic Autobots and Evil Decepticons—have access to the game's entire weapons gallery (whether primary or heavy weapons) in single player mode and can be bought at a Teletraan One store. In multiplayer mode, weapons are divided between the classes based on hours upon hours of play testing—therefore, not every character class can use every weapon.

With this arsenal of inimitable weapons at their disposal, the playable characters within *Fall of Cybertron* possess an artillery battery to rival any other platform game on the market. As most gamers know, it's the variety and ingenuity of offered weapons that can make or break a third-person shooter. Game Director Matt Tieger not only understands the importance of having a broad selection of weapons, but of the necessity of upgrades. So then, each weapon's upgrade affords the gamer a significant improvement—so there is a distinct urge to pursue weapon advancement. Better yet, you need only upgrade your weapon once, since upgraded weapons can be transferred from character to character.

In *Fall of Cybertron*, High Moon allows gamers to reveal a variety of weapon modifications that every player may unlock through the course of the 13-chapter narrative. Through Teletraan One stations scattered across the ravaged landscape of Cybertron, gamers may unlock such specifications as range, rate of fire, ammunition capacity, etc. Furthermore, secondary modes of fire and other effects may also be purchased.



A4 PULSAR CANNON

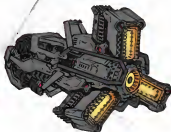
Essentially, the A4 Pulsar Cannon fires projectiles similar to those sticky bombs popularized by British soldiers in WWII (which were glass spheres containing nitroglycerin coated with a potent adhesive)—except with an improved function: these shells can be stuck to an object and remotely detonated at any time determined by the gamer. A highly useful and versatile weapon, the A4's projectiles can also be utilized as an ingenious trap: Want to create a minefield? No problem. Arrange several of the energy clusters on the ground and simply wait for your enemy to round the corner. In multiplayer, it's even more effective...



CHAOS RIFT COMBUSTER

Originally constructed to function as the alternate fire mode for Megatron's tank cannon, the Chaos Rift Combuster is essentially a modified grenade launcher. When wielding the Combuster, a shot must first be lined up, then, upon pulling the trigger, the weapon's copious cluster munitions are fired along the path of that respective arc—exploding on impact in a flurry of bomblets. Or you may choose to detonate these munitions prematurely, affecting them to rain down on your enemy in a hail of deadly firecrackers.

DIMENSIONAL DECIMATOR
The Decimator launches a large metal sphere toward the enemy—however, this modest sphere metamorphoses into a tiny black hole surrounded by a whirling green energy vortex that sucks everything within its path into its maw. Finally, once your enemy [plus other debris] is contained within the center of this "dimensional rift," the grenade explodes—expelling outwards everything that has been sucked within the eye of the vortex.



ENERGON HARVESTER

What the Harvester lacks in offensive firepower it more than makes up for with utility. Are you low on Energon? Simply fire this armament at your enemies and steal some of their life force for your own; essentially, the combination of a shotgun and a drain gun, this weapon is the one you reach for when all of the chips are down.



GEAR SHREDDER

The devastating Gear Shredder has two functions: 1) it can expel a circular blade that wreaks havoc on hidden enemies as its projectile can ricochet off walls and around corners, or 2) you may choose not to eject this blade and therefore use the Shredder as a melee weapon in hand-to-hand combat. Furthermore, after upgrading the weapon, you'll delight in the fact that it expels *multiple* blades, altering the Shredder into a distinctly deadly armament as you progress through the levels of Fall of Cybertron.



NUCLEON CHARGE RIFLE

An updated variation of the original null-ray weapon (utilized by Generation One's Starscream), the Nucleon Charge Rifle is an über-powerful sniper's rifle. Utilizing a telescopic sight to gauge the distance to your enemy, this weapon issues forth a single, potent round. The power of this shot is determined by the amount of time you take to "charge" the weapon; the more you charge the weapon, the more damage done.



PHOTON BURST RIFLE

Although this weapon basically functions as an assault rifle (firing its rounds in short, fierce bursts), when arming the Photon Burst Rifle a gamer is afforded a special treat: they may view an opponent's health status on the weapon's Heads-Up-Display (HUD)... an extremely advantageous ability. Once upgraded, the Photon Burst Rifle evolves into something even more impressive—you no longer have to press the trigger to fire the weapon; the armament can be set to automatically fire multiple rounds of ammunition.



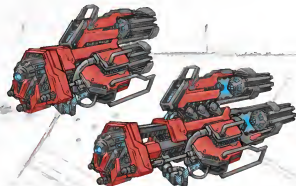
RIOT CANNON

Once you begin the game, the Riot Cannon fundamentally functions as a one-shot weapon, but when fully upgraded this armament performs a role similar to that of Generation One Megatron's fusion cannon: a single shot from this "howitzer" yields a miniature yet devastating nuclear blast. The discharge from the Riot Cannon is so powerful that gamers can annihilate multiple enemies in one single, unbelievably potent shot.



X-18 SCRAPMAKER

An updated version of *War for Cybertron's* X-12 autocannon, the X-18 triple-barreled chain gun tears through weaker Cybertronian armor plating like a hot knife through butter, yet burns through ammunition at a high cyclic rate. Unfortunately, when equipped to smaller Autobots such as Bumblebee or Cliffjumper the X-18 Scrapmaker looks a bit bulky and awkward, but on more massive Transformers it appears formidably fearsome.

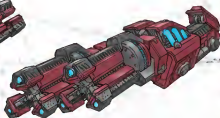
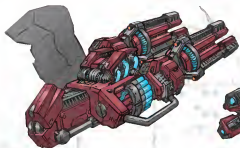




CORROSIVE SLIME CANNON



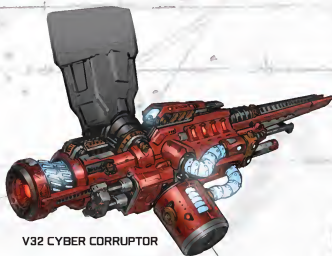
K-MINE



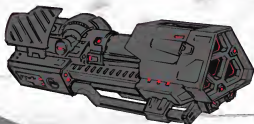
ASSAULT RIFLE



GRAVITY BOMB



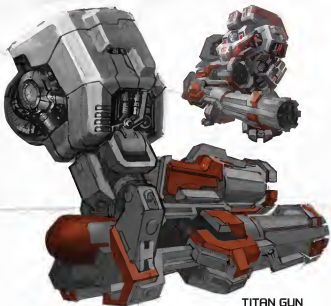
V32 CYBER CORRUPTOR



SHOTGUN



AI SOLDIER ASSAULT GUN



TITAN GUN



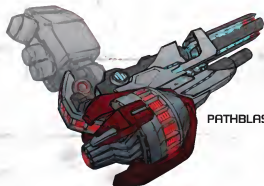
THERMO ROCKET LAUNCHER



SCATTERBLASTER



ROCKET LAUNCHER



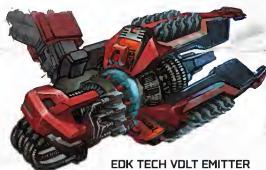
PATHBLASTER



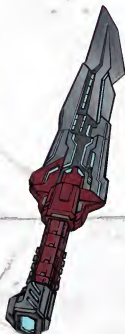
SOLDIER ROCKET LAUNCHER



SENTRY ORB



EDK TECH VOLT EMITTER



SWORDS

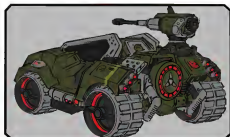
GRIMLOCK / MEGATRON / OPTIMUS PRIME



SUBSONIC REPEATER

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

TRANSFORMERS
HOUND



TRANSFORMERS
WHEELJACK



メトロポリス
METROPOLIS



PROWL



ULTRA MAGNUS



トランスフォーマー
ZETA PRIME





DRAG STRIP

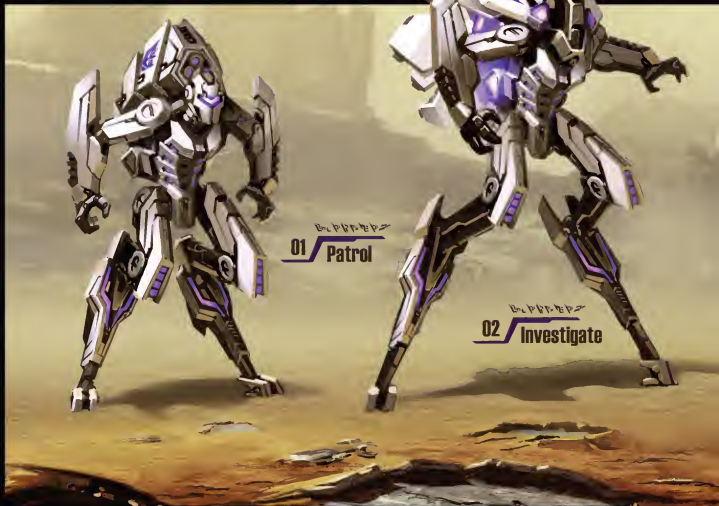


QUAKE

RAVAGE

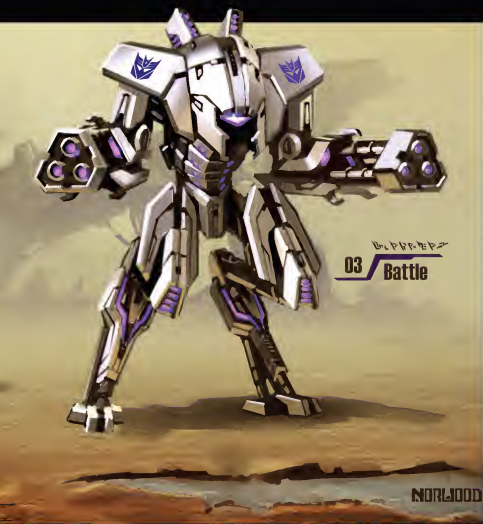


SENTRY





LEAPER





スプリング
SPRINGER





BROADSIDE



UNUSED CONCEPTS: THE SEA OF RUST

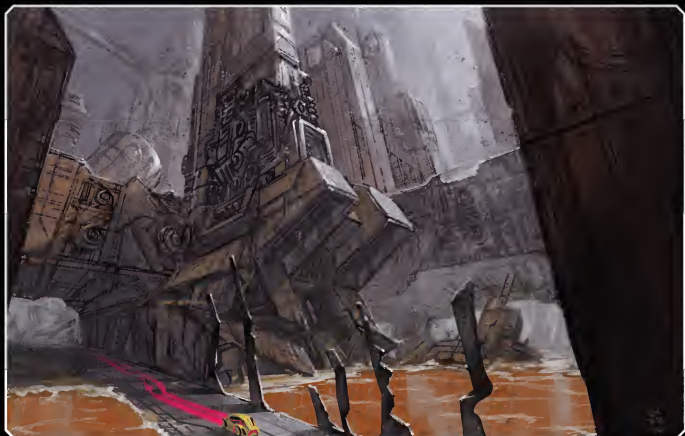


The multitude of brilliant unused concept sketches of the Sea of Rust shows to what extent High Moon planned and executed this massive undertaking. These images only hint at what could have been...











The Art of Transformers: Fall of Cybertron provides "Transfans" the world over with an abundance of unreleased, behind-the-scenes concept sketches and pre-production paintings as rendered by the world's preeminent video game designers. For those video game enthusiasts who own the title and yearn to take an extensive peek behind the curtain, or for curious fans who would like to read more about the back story of their favorite Autobots and Decepticons, this tome's spectacular artwork and stellar character designs will illustrate the epic voyage that High Moon Studios embarked upon in order to concoct one of the finest video games ever created.

IDW



ACTIVISION